

**COOKING DEVICE WITH A PREDETERMINED PARAMETER,
PROGRAM AND/OR MODE OF OPERATION**

5 The present invention concerns a cooking device in which at least one
parameter is preset for at least one predetermined program and/or for at least one
predetermined mode of operation.

10 Cooking devices are known from the state of the art, which are already
provided with predetermined programs or modes of operation by the manufacturer.
Within these programs or modes of operation the parameters are also preset
correspondingly. A program for a cooking device will be used as the term under
which various modes of operation can be assigned which run in succession.

15 Preset modes of operation or cooking programs have cooking
parameters which are usually set in the middle of the possible setting range. Preset
modes of operation or cooking programs make it possible for the user to use a
cooking device in a simple and efficient manner since such cooking devices represent
an enormous facilitation of operation and savings in time.

20 However, a disadvantage of the known cooking devices is that, as
stated above, the presettings are very general and as a rule lie in a standard range.
Individual setting of the cooking parameters in order to run very special cooking
processes or when cooking particular cooking products is possible only to a very
limited degree or not at all with the known cooking devices. This limits the
25 usefulness of such cooking devices with predetermined modes of operation or
cooking programs considerably.

30 The task of the present invention is to provide a cooking device which
overcomes the disadvantages of the state of the art and provides especially high
flexibility and many different types of use while at the same time maintaining easy
operation..

This task is solved by a cooking device in which at least one parameter is preset for at least one predetermined program, such as in the form of a cooking program and/or cleaning program and/or for at least one predetermined mode of operation, such as in the form of a cooking mode of operation or cleaning mode of operation, and the preset parameter can be changed using at least one modification function element of a control element of the cooking device, and the modification can be confirmed, accepted and/or stored during a predetermined time period and automatically after this time period through at least one confirmation- and/or storage function element of the control element of the cooking device.

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Hereby it can be provided that the predetermined time period is adjustable, preferably through the control element, and especially about 1 to about 30 seconds after the last activation of the control element.

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It is preferred according to the invention that the parameter be preset for a specific country, for the particular location and/or specifically for a selectable operating language of the cooking device, whereby preferably all parameters are preset for at least one program and/or for at least one mode of operation for the particular location and/or the selectable language of operation.

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It is also preferred when at least one modification can be performed within predetermined, unchangeable limits, whereby the limits are preferably preset specifically for the country, for the particular location and/or for the selectable language of operation.

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Hereby it can be provided that the presetting is performed automatically as a function of a location, detected especially by a locating system, and/or as a function of a selected language of operation.

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An embodiment of the invention can be provided in which the modification function element comprises at least one dial, at least one display and/or at least one touch screen, whereby the touch screen comprises at least one touch element, especially with at least one bar graph.

Hereby it can be provided that the parameter is modifiable by at least occasional stroking of the touch element, preferably along the bar graph, especially with a finger.

5 It is also proposed with the invention that the confirmation and/or storage function element comprise at least one push button, at least one display and/or at least one touch screen, whereby preferably the touch screen has at least one touch element.

10 Hereby it can be provided that the push button is arranged in the region of the dial, whereby preferably the push button is arranged centrally within the dial or is molded in one piece with the dial.

15 Practical examples of the invention are characterized by the fact that the modification function element, especially the dial and/or the confirmation- and/or storage element, especially the dial, can be recessed in the cooking device, especially in the control element, at least occasionally at least partially, using a recessing device.

20 Hereby it is preferred that the recessing device can be adjusted manually and/or automatically as a function of at least one program and/or at least one mode of operation.

25 Similarly, according to the invention it can be provided that the confirmation- and/or storage function element comprise at least one signal emitter which, upon confirmation and/or storage of at least one parameter, emits at least one signal tone and/or causes, at least in one region, a color change on the control element, especially on the display, preferably of the touch element.

30 Another preferred embodiment of the invention is characterized by a notepad function for storing at least one altered parameter of at least one altered program and/or of at least one altered mode of operation, preferably under an enterable, especially freely selectable name, symbol, sign and/or pictogram.

Hereby it is provided that the notepad function is activated by means of at least one touch element, especially including at least one pictogram on a touch screen of the control element of the cooking device.

5 Furthermore it can also be provided that, using the notepad function, one can change from a first parameter to be modified, from a first program to be modified and/or from a first mode of operation to be modified, to a second parameter to be modified to a second program to be modified, or to a second mode of operation to be modified, that is, the change of the parameters, programs and/or modes of
10 operation can be carried out in a way that is changeable or finalized.

 Finally, according to the invention an embodiment is proposed which is characterized by a control and/or regulating unit in working connection with the modification function element, the confirmation- and/or storage function element, the
15 locating system and/or the recessing device.

 The invention is based on the surprising finding that preset parameters for predetermined programs and/or modes of operation can be altered in a simple manner and then confirmed and/or stored, in order to increase the flexibility and the
20 possible applications of a cooking device, but without equally increasing the complexity of the operability. Hereby, in the framework of the present invention, the term "confirmation" is to be understood as accepting changed parameters only for the program that is presently performed or for the present mode of operation, while the concept "storage" means the changed parameters are entered into a memory which is
25 then the basis for all future programs or modes of operation to be performed.. Both the confirmation as well as the storage occurs either actively, namely by operating a control element, or automatically, namely after the elapse of a certain time period.

 The term "bar graph" as it is used in the present invention, is to be
30 understood as a bar of a touch screen which has a type of scaling on which a desired parameter value can be set by stroking with the finger of the user.

 Control elements arranged inside one another or combined save space. Recessable control elements are not only aesthetic in appearance, but facilitate

operation, especially when they only emerge from their recess in a program-controlled manner, namely only when they are to be activated or are activatable.

5 In the cooking devices according to the invention, it is especially advantageous to predetermine the parameters and/or limiting values of these specifically for a country, especially when these are automatically set at the location of installation, which further simplifies operation of the cooking device according to the invention.

10 It is also especially advantageous in the cooking devices according to the invention when the predetermined parameters and/or limiting values are selected specifically as a function of a selected operating language. Such a language-specific presetting makes the operation of the cooking device possible independently of the location of installation in which a language is spoken other than the one with which
15 the cooking device is to be operated. The variation of the presetting of the parameters and/or of the limiting values with respect to the location and/or the language of operation increases the flexibility of the cooking device according to the invention. In case of a language-specific predetermination, the cooking device according to the invention can therefore be adjusted variably to the each individual user, by the user
20 entering his preferred operating language of operation for the cooking device. Thus, for example, it is possible that an English-speaking user of the cooking device according to the invention who would like to eat the steak completely well-done, can use the device without any problem, although it is set for France, where a steak, as a rule, is to be preferably cooked to "medium." For this purpose, the English-speaking
25 user only needs to enter English as the operating language, so that the parameters preset for the predetermined program in the cooking device can be recalled for the English operating language. By using the modification function element of the cooking device according to the invention, the user can optimize the preset parameters according to his or her wishes.

30 In order to store modified parameters, programs and/or modes of operation according to the invention, preferably a notepad function is provided which especially preferably is provided as a touch element on a touch screen of the control element of the cooking device. With this notepad function, a structured storage can

be performed at different operating menu levels. The operation of the notepad function can lead, for example, to a finalizing of the input process (that is, to the modification of the parameters or similar) or it may also lead to change to the next mode of operation.

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Other characteristics and advantages of the invention follow from the detailed description given below in which a practical example of the invention will be explained in detail with the aid of a schematic drawing. The following are shown:

10 Figure 1 is a section of a main menu level of a control element during operation of a cooking device according to the invention;

 Figure 2 is a section of a first sub-menu level which follows from the main menu level from Figure 1;

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 Figure 3 is a section of a second sub-menu level which follows from the first sub-menu level from Figure 2; and

 Figure 4 is the second sub-menu level from Figure 3 during operation of
20 a cooking process in the cooking device according to the invention.

 As can be seen from Figure 1, a main menu level of a control element 1 for a cooking device according to the invention comprises a number of operating elements 2, which offer, for example, when the cooking device is turned on, a
25 selection of cooking programs, for which the cooking device offers corresponding preset modes of operation as well as cooking parameters. According to Figure 1, such cooking programs can comprise, for example, "roasts," "pan fries," "poultry," "fish," "baking," "side dishes" or "finishing." Preferably these cooking programs are presented in the form of pictograms on the operating elements 2. Especially, it is also
30 preferred when the operating elements 2 are touch elements of a touch screen. The operating element 2 "F" represents a function key with which other functions of the cooking device can be selected, for example a programming lock, a start time input, a cleaning program, a lime removal program or similar, which do not involve any cooking.

Below the operating elements 2, in Figure 1, besides a program key element 3, a dial 4 is provided which can be turned in the direction of the arrows as will be described below in order to change preset cooking parameters. The dial 4 also includes a push button 5 and by pressing this, for example, modified cooking parameters can be confirmed and/or stored.

Starting from the main operating level, which is shown in Figure 1 as a section, one can arrive, for example, at the first sub-menu level which is shown in Figure 2 in a section by activating the operating element 2 "roasts." This first sub-menu level again includes a number of operating elements 2', which offer the possible cooking programs under the cooking program "roasts." These are, for example, the cooking programs shown in Figure 2 such as "universal roasting," "roast with cracklings," "soft roasting," "soft cooking," "overnight roasting," and "overnight cooking."

For example, by activating the operating element 2' "universal roasting", one arrives automatically at a second sub-menu level shown in Figure 3. This second sub-menu level offers for the cooking program "universal roasting" the possibility to modify individual modes of operation or cooking parameters of the cooking process. As an example, in Figure 3 the operating elements 2'' are provided for setting the cooking parameters with regard to the browning of the roast and with regard to the core temperature of the roast. One can easily see that many other operating elements can be provided for other cooking parameters.

The operating elements 2'' include a first touch element 7a or 8a and in each case a bar graph 7b or 8b as second touch element. For example, with the bar graph 7b, the desired browning of the roast can be set between the limiting values of "light" and "dark" by having the user stroke his or her finger over bar graph 7b and set the parameter correspondingly. The set value is shown in a frame 9. Similarly, the cooking parameter for the core temperature of the roast can be set through the other bar graph 8b, whereby for the limiting values "rare" and "well-done," corresponding core temperatures are established.

The set cooking parameters with regard to browning and core temperature of the roast can also be modified or fine adjusted as follows:

Let us say that, for example, on the second sub-operating level from Figure 3, the cooking parameter needs to be altered with regard to browning of the roast. For this purpose, first the touch element 7a is operated, which activates the operating element 2'' so that a change becomes possible at all. When the operating element 2'' is activated, then the corresponding cooking parameter can be adjusted as desired either by appropriate turning of the dial 4 or by a stroking of the bar graph 7b.

In the case shown in Figure 4 the parameter is set in a middle position between "light" and "dark," which is shown by the Frame 9.

A confirmation or storage of the set cooking parameter with regard to browning can occur, for example, by pressing the push button 5. However, one can also imagine that the modified cooking parameter is accepted automatically by the cooking device after the elapse of a predetermined time duration after the last input or modification. A confirmation can also occur by subsequent pressing of touch element 7a.

Finally, in the second sub-operating level a memory element 10 is provided which makes it possible to store the modified cooking parameter via a notepad function as described before.

Preferably it is also provided that a confirmation or storage of the adjusted cooking parameters is related to an acoustic signal of the cooking device or to a color change in the control element of the cooking device.

Analogously, in order to change the core temperature, the touch element 8a can be operated and then the parameter can be modified via the bar graph 8b or the dial 4.

As can be seen from touch element 8a, the setting of the core temperature requires the setting of a temperature sensor into a roast. Preferably, it is

provided that the cooking device sends a request or a signal when it recognizes that the temperature sensor is not inserted in the roast.

5 The setting of the cooking parameters with the aid of dial 4 or bar graph 7b, 8b, is preferably possible essentially continuously. As it will be understood by a person skilled in the art, for the cooking parameters shown in Figure 4, suitable temperature values are established. Hereby the corresponding preadjustment can be specific for the country, that is, it can depend on the location. Thus, for example, in Germany the selection of "rare" is achieved by setting the core temperature to a
10 desired core temperature of, for example, 65°C, while for the setting "well-done", a core temperature of 78°C must be reached. In France, for example, these values can be set differently. The location of the cooking equipment can be detected automatically, for example with the aid of a locating system, so that a presetting of the parameters specifically for a country can occur automatically.

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Figure 4 shows the second sub-menu level during the operation of a cooking process. Hereby, in this sub-menu level further data can be shown such as, for example, a residual running time 11 of the cooking process or a presently-existing actual core temperature 12 of the roast.

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The characteristics of the invention disclosed in the previous description, in the drawings as well as in the claims, can be essential individually as well as in any arbitrary combination for the realization of the invention in its different embodiments.

Reference list

	1	Control element
5	2, 2', 2''	Operating element
	3	Program key element
	4	Dial
	5	Push button
	7a, 8a	Touch element
10	7b, 8b	Bar graph
	9	Frame
	10	Storage element
	11	Residual running time display
	12	Actual core temperature display